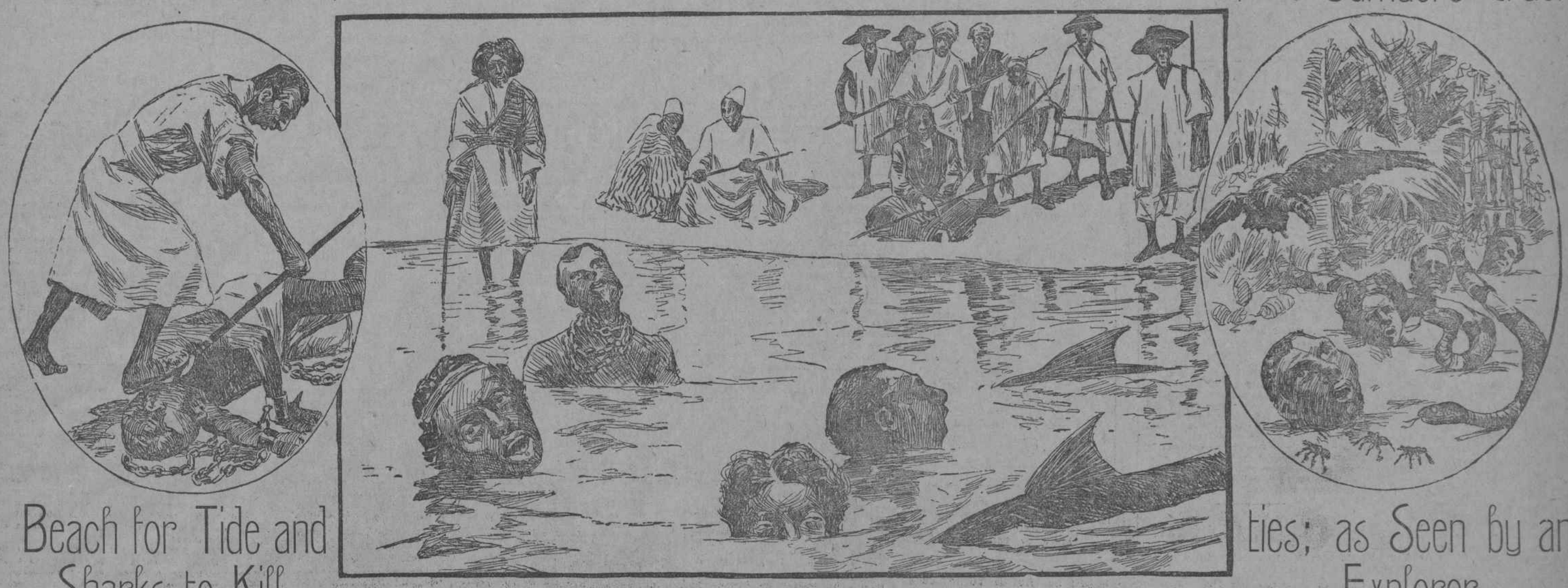
THE FATE OF A MAN WHO INVENTED NOVEL TORTURES.

Buried Victims on the Beach for Tide and Sharks to Kill

HOW RAS SAMUEL EXECUTED THE BANDITS.

Ras Samuel's Cruelties; as Seen by an Explorer



"The Tide Rose Higher and Higher, and as the Water Deepened the Sharks Scented Prey."

The following story of Ras Samuel's brutality to his starving subjects of Nossibe and of his bloody atonement for their barbaric wrongs, was told to Mr. Frederick Taylor, of the Royal Geographical Society, while he was making in Madagascar those personal observations and investigations on which was based the historic study of the island under French domination, given in the North American Review for October, '96. The narrative is taken direct from Mr. Taylor's notes.

From far off Madagascar, where the French invaders are fighting for life against the wild tribes of the tropical forest, comes the thrilling story of the tragedy of Nossibe. No episode of recent history is so crimsoned with human gore, so punctuated by the crunch of spears. Instead of being buried to the neck in the sands of Murderers' Bay, as most of the wretches condemned to capital punishment have so long been doomed by the Hova Government, the executioners of the head men of the province of Nossibe were put to death with assegais, in the open, with the sun beating down on their brown necks, bared to the keen edge of the heavy headed spears, the blades of which were pressed down by the sandaled feet of the Queen's men until the gush of blood and the cracking of bone rewarded the gloating gaze of the officials in charge.

This is how it came about: The Government of the Hovas, who were nominally, at least, the ruling race in Madagascar before the French occupation, has grown old in cruelty and torture. The desolate mountain sides and pathless morasses of the great tropical island of the Malagasy have for a century echoed the cries of the starving slaves, turned loose in their iron fetters, bound hand, neck and feet, to wander in search of subsistence, reporting from time to time to a central station, until death mercifully relieved them. The fierce Sihanakas, the Betsimisarikas, the wild Ianhosi would not submit to Hova domination, but their forests were fretted by the sore-shouldered, broken-down carriers, the emaciated prisoners in shackles, who were turned out to die by the Hovas of Imerina. So now and again these other outer tribes would protest and threaten war, and the Hova warriors, who were now of late years armed with muskets, would slay and shoot and make captives, and the fate of all those captives who could be construed as subject to capital punishment by the laws of the Hovas would be buried to the chin in the shifting sands of that dreary shallow inlet on the west coast, now and for so long known as Murderers' Bay.

In the West coast of the island this bay of doom creeps into the marshy arms of the shore. Up and down the west coast roam bands of outlaws, extending their depredations far into the interior toward the semi-civilized people of Imerina, the Hova's province. The thugs of India, who roamed in bands, doing murder as part business, part art, were more consistent and accomplished in their methods than these club swingers of the Madagascar forests. Ras Samuel, Governor of Nossibe, by the grace of Queen Ranavolomanjaka and the aged Prime Minister, Rainilaiarivony, made his name by the diabolical ingenuity of his punishment of Ranola's band.

There were fourteen in Ranola's band, and they were captured asleep after a palm wine debauch. Ras Samuel clapped them in the heaviest fetters he could find, even knocking a wandering slave or two on the head to get the use of his chains, if they looked particularly onerous. Then the followers of Ranola were led down to Murderers' Bay, piled in the brush over night, for they were so loaded down with iron they could scarcely move after the long day's travel, and left to contemplate the coming day.

Before the sun rose over the mountains the Ranola men were divided into three groups. From the legs of six the shackles were knocked off—so they could struggle better—and they were walked down to the water's edge and forced to stand in a row in the treacherous sand, which slowly rose over their feet and oozed up their calves and held them faster than chains of iron by the time it had climbed to their knees. The other eight Ranola men looked on, while Ras Samuel threw assegais against their gradually disappearing brethren, the gouts of blood which followed each spear-cut gleaming in the morning sun. Hand and arm these poor fellows could not lift to help each other or keep the spears away from themselves; they were unshackled only below the waist. When the sand had crawled up to their waists and began squeezing their vitals and compressing their lungs they shrieked at first, and their convulsions were fierce. The sand held them upright, and they could not even throw themselves down to hasten the coming of merciful death. They were indeed bound hand and foot, fixed in the rack. They were an hour dying, and the sun was hot when the soft sand sucked them under, and only a puddle showed where each head had gone down.

The next four of Ranola's men were dragged to the edge of the incoming tide and set upright, each with an assegai at his back, on the wet beach. The weight of their chains prevented their getting up once they were helped to sit down. As the tide rose higher and higher, the louder they howled; but Ras Samuel only laughed. And as the water deepened the sharks scented prey, and some of the maneaters swam boldly up to the sitting captives and nosed them as a dog does a hare. They were big men, and the water was three feet deep before it covered their chins, and the sharks were biting away at a great rate. A pig caught under a Hova gate never yelled any louder, but Ras Samuel could only see the blood rising in the water and the back fins of the sea devils. He couldn't see their teeth meet in the brown flesh, which riled him. There were now just four of the Ranola men left, and for them Ras had reserved the ancient and honored rite of living burial in the earth.

The four wretches, now half dead of fright and fatigue and starvation, for they had had neither food nor water since they were captured, twenty-four hours before, were rolled up to the edge of the bush. With axes and hoes the men of Ras Samuel fell to digging. A pit twelve feet long and six feet deep was speedily excavated. At noon they heaved in the shackled victims. By and by, in spite of fears and supplications and piteous pleadings, the soft earth was pressed into the grave around them, until only the head of each stood up like a decapitated head on the surface of the firm soil.

Now the forest beaters ran into the bush and the tarantula hunt began. There were snakes to be shooed out, too, and all the ola birds wanted was to be let alone. They would come speedily for their morsels of warm flesh and soft sinew. When the serpents and the tarantulas had been driven into the circle of brush and only waited silence to vent their rage at being disturbed on the men's heads they saw near them, agonized, eyes starting, nostrils quivering and lips ashy white, Ras Samuel and his gang marched three times around the circle, chanting "Good-bye, good-bye," and then vanished in the bush, homeward bound to Nossibe.

Now, for years Ras Samuel had starved his people. He had stolen their cattle and plundered their rice fields; they were starving to death slowly. They resolved that a hundred of them should go to Antananarivo and seek redress at the throne itself. When they arrived at the capital the great feast of the Fandroona was in progress, and the starving supplicants of Nossibe were told to go home and wait until after the feast and then come back.

Worn out, barely alive, they counselled. Nossibe once more in sight, if they should dare to ask food from their own rice fields from Ras Samuel, the Governor. And seventy-two of the hundred mustered the courage. "Retire," replied Ras Samuel, "to the huts on the hill yonder, and throw down your arms. I will presently attend to you."

Then he summoned his brother, Rameatkatra, other Hova chiefs and a band of Hova soldiers from his garrison—for the Hovas held their own over the Sakalavas, Tanhosis, Betsemarikas, Baras, Sihanikas and Betsefos by sheer force. The chiefs came with their assegais and other weapons, and that night, while the starving were sleeping, they were slaughtered like so many sheep, and their blood ran down the hillside. Twenty-eight of them, who had specially angered Ras Samuel, the Hova Governor, by daring to demand their own from him, were brought out into the open, bound and there laid out, face down, in rows, ready for the executioners. Ras Samuel looked on in silence as the keen blades of the spears were pressed into the necks of these poor human cattle; the crunching of their bones was music in his ears. The heads were set up on bamboo poles about the palace for him to gloat over.

By and by the Faudroona was over, and Rainilaiarivony, far off at Antananarivo, bethought him of his wretched subjects in Nossibe. Then there was a ruction; the Governor, Ras Samuel, his brother Rameatkatra, the Lieutenant-Governor, and the five soldiers whose assegais had been the bloody work, were seized, condemned to the same fate, and incontinently bound out into the open, as their victims had been. The same spears were imbrued more in Hova blood, and Ras Samuel, fastened down on the brown earth, made no complaint as the executioner put his foot on his neck. The first spear thrust didn't end it. "That will do; oh, I'm dead; I'm dead," shrieked Ras Samuel, but the headsman used his spear once more, replying: "Hah! We know when you are dead."

SPENDTHRIFT NEW YORK.

The Richest City in the World, It Pours Forth Millions for the Things It Considers "Fun."

This New York of ours is an over-rich, over-lazy, luxury-loving big town. Poor folk and rich folk alike work hard, but goodness knows they play hard, too. In New York money is made faster than in any other metropolis on earth, but when the purse string is loosed, how the dollars fly!

If the aggregate wealth of the Greater New York were divided pro rata among its 3,500,000 inhabitants, the share of each would be about $3,800. This is the largest per capita of wealth shown in any city in the world. Richest of all cities, it is the most luxurious as well. In the items of wine, beer and spirits, cigars and tobacco in various forms, theatre patronage, pleasure vehicles and fine horses, cut flowers and ornamental plants, European travel, diamonds, jewelry and bicycles, there is annually expended in New York the colossal sum of $185,000,000, or about $53 per capita.

The unit of comparison is the figure representing the total population, or the embodiment of $3,500,000. Accepting the argument of the prohibitionist that all manner of malt, vinous and spiritous beverages are luxuries pure and simple, it would appear that a total of $100,000,000 is spent on the beverages that cheer and also inebriate. Of this total, $30,000,000 is paid for lager beer. It represents 3,750,000 barrels of thirty-two gallons each, or one barrel and a fraction over for every man, woman and child on Manhattan and Long Islands.

The $70,000,000 that pays for the wine and spirits consumed in the metropolis towers over the contrasted luxuries. New York is essentially the home of the wine opener, and a statistician connected with the leading wholesale liquor dealers' newspaper says that one-fourth of all the wine imported from Europe and made in California is swallowed on Father Knickerbocker's island.

Next in the scale of luxuries is tobacco, though some very wise and honest men maintain that it is one of the necessities of life. The average smoker will take that view of it. The figure of $30,000,000 is agreed upon as approximately correct by manufacturers and experts in the trade. It may be subdivided in this wise: Cigars, $17,600,000; cigarettes, $9,000,000; smoking tobacco, $3,000,000, and chewing tobacco, $1,000,000.

There is but scant inducement to the purchase of trotters in New York. There is no place to trot them. Some day there will be a speedway on the banks of the Harlem; some day we will see it, but notwithstanding the fact that most fourth and fifth class towns have more true "boulevards" than can be found within the limits of the Greater New York, the annual sales of high-bred roadsters, trotters and pacers and thoroughbred saddle horses, averages, according to the testimony of the veteran William Easton, $4,000,000 annually. The traffic in carriage horses and pleasure vehicles of all sorts will aggregate twice this amount, and the harness makers, feed dealers, grooms, trainers, coachmen, footmen and stable boys swell the total of expenditure to $15,000,000.

The annual sales of diamonds and jewelry have been known to reach $30,000,000 in a single year, but that was in the good old times of which we hear so much now but did not appreciate at the time. A conservative estimate by Maiden lane and upper Broadway dealers place the local sales at $20,000,000.

The complaint of the socialistic agitator that the American makes his money at home and spends it in Europe is partially borne out by the figures. The sales of steamship tickets at this port alone amount to $4,000,000 annually. The agent of one of the oldest trans-Atlantic lines states that at least 75 per cent of this amount is sold to citizens of New York who go abroad for pleasure. The amount of money taken out of New York for this one luxury alone is conservatively estimated at $20,000,000.

There will be sold in the Greater New York during the next year not less than 125,000 bicycles, which may be averaged at $60 each, and there is a cool $7,500,000 more.

New Yorkers are a theatre going lot as is shown by the fact that full $6,000,000 is annually passed into the box offices of the places of amusement, in which this city abounds as does no other city in the world.

New York must have flowers on all festal occasions and at all social functions. The more out of season the flower, the more imperatively does New York demand it, and for the gratification of this most luxurious of appetites she pays every year a round $3,500,000.

HE BATHED IN BEER.

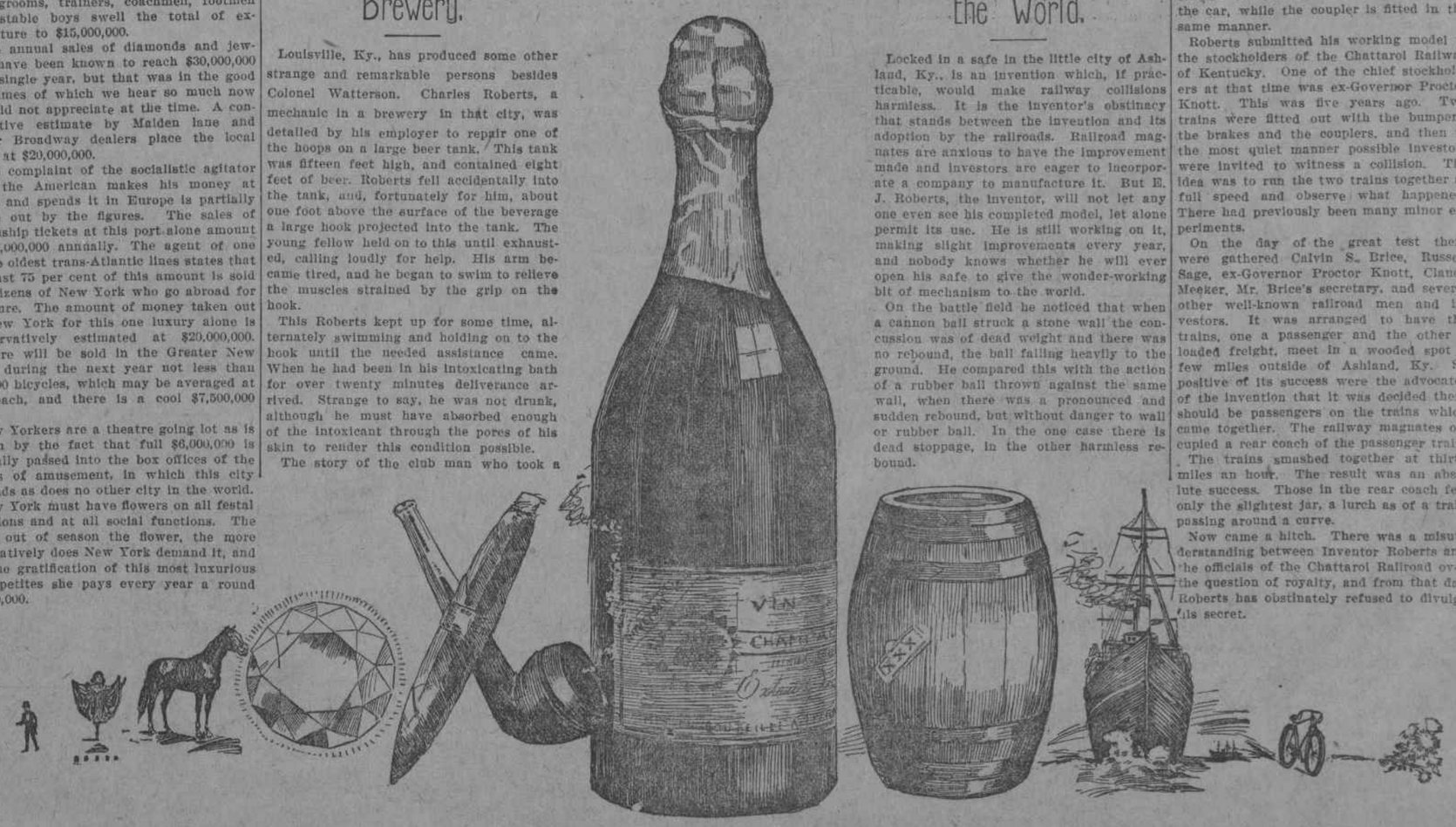
The Curious Accident That Befel an Employe of a Louisville Brewery.

Louisville, Ky., has produced some other strange and remarkable persons besides Colonel Watterson. Charles Roberts, a mechanic in a brewery in that city, was detailed by his employer to repair one of the hoops on a large beer tank. This tank was fifteen feet high, and contained eight feet of beer. Roberts fell accidentally into the tank, and, fortunately for him, about one foot above the surface of the beverage a large hook projected into the tank. The young fellow held on to this until exhausted, calling loudly for help. His arm became tired, and he began to swim to relieve the muscles strained by the grip on the hook.

This Roberts kept up for some time, alternately swimming and holding on to the hook until the needed assistance came. When he had been in his intoxicating bath for over twenty minutes deliverance arrived. Strange to say, he was not drunk, although he must have absorbed enough of the intoxicant through the pores of his skin to render this condition possible.

The story of the club man who took a bath in champagne, thirty quarts, and his suicide is well known. What the effects of his bath were he did not live to tell, but it evidently stimulated him and made him able to take his life. In fact, that was said by his friends to have been the object of his extravagant plunge. It would not be surprising if some of the Colonel Booze and others of Kentucky should adopt the idea suggested by Roberts's accident and resort to beer baths as a method of absorbing into their systems more than they are at present capable of doing through the mouth and stomach.

If they should, there will be a boom in brewery stocks, and more beds in the alcoholic wards of Kentucky's hospitals.



Theatres, $6,000,000; Horses, $15,000,000; Diamonds, $20,000,000; Cigars and Tobacco, $30,000,000; Wines and Liquors, $70,000,000; Beer, $30,000,000; Ocean Travel, $20,000,000; Bicycles, $7,500,000; Flowers, $3,500,000.

R.R. COLLISIONS HARMLESS.

But the Obstinacy of This Inventor Keeps the Secret from the World.

Locked in a safe in the little city of Ashland, Ky., is an invention which, if practicable, would make railway collisions harmless. It is the inventor's obstinacy that stands between the invention and its adoption by the railroads. Railroad magnates are anxious to have the improvement made and investors are eager to incorporate a company to manufacture it. But E. J. Roberts, the inventor, will not let any one even see his completed model, let alone permit its use. He is still working on it, making slight improvements every year, and nobody knows whether he will ever open his safe to give the wonder-working bit of mechanism to the world.

On the battle field he noticed that when a cannon ball struck a stone wall the concussion was of dead weight and there was no rebound, the ball falling heavily to the ground. He compared this with the action of a rubber ball thrown against the same wall, when there was a pronounced and sudden rebound, but without danger to wall or rubber ball. In the one case there is dead stoppage, in the other harmless rebound.

He now considered how this idea could be employed in some practical form to a railroad train. His original idea was merely to try to nullify the shock due to a sudden stopping of the train. But he became convinced that he could apply the same principle to cars in collision.

At last the invention was completed, in the shape of an arrangement with mighty springs at the drawhead of cars, which answered the purpose of the rubber ball. He combined with his idea a coupler and a brake. In making tests, Roberts often made trips of forty and fifty miles length swung up beneath the cars in a sort of hammock, watching the workings of his brake. The brake is operated by a lever either from the cab of the engine or from the car, while the coupler is fitted in the same manner.

Roberts submitted his working model to the stockholders of the Chattarol Railway of Kentucky. One of the chief stockholders at that time was ex-Governor Proctor Knott. This was five years ago. Two trains were fitted out with the bumpers, the brakes and the couplers, and then in the most quiet manner possible investors were invited to witness a collision. The idea was to run the two trains together at full speed and observe what happened. There had previously been many minor experiments.

On the day of the great test there were gathered Calvin S. Brice, Russell Sage, ex-Governor Proctor Knott, Claude Meeker, Mr. Brice's secretary, and several other well-known railroad men and investors. It was arranged to have the trains, one a passenger and the other a loaded freight, meet in a wooded spot a few miles outside of Ashland, Ky. So positive of its success were the advocates of the invention that it was decided there should be passengers on the trains which came together. The railway magnates occupied a rear coach of the passenger train.

The trains smashed together at thirty miles an hour. The result was an absolute success. Those in the rear coach felt only the slightest jar, a lurch as of a train passing around a curve.

Now came a hitch. There was a misunderstanding between Inventor Roberts and the officials of the Chattarol Railroad over the question of royalty, and from that day Roberts has obstinately refused to divulge his secret.

A REAL FREAK OF NATURE.

We Have Just Experienced the Most Remarkable Weather in Centuries.

Never in its history since the flood, so far as is known, has the world experienced such remarkable weather as during the past nineteen months. Nature seems to have shifted her weather methods entirely, and to have made up her mind to show all creation just what she can do.

The tornadoes which afflicted the Middle States this Spring ended a drought which affected a large portion of the same area so severely as to allow the bed of the Ohio River to be worked for coal, reduced the fall of Niagara and lowered the St. Lawrence River in unprecedented degree.

Investigation also shows that ever since February, 1895, equally abnormal conditions have been prevalent over India, Australia and the Pacific and Indian oceans. The southeast tradewind of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific and Indian oceans.

On the Australian side of the high-pressure atmospheric wall bounding the southeast trades, an extraordinary prevalence of hot, dry northwest winds occurred right on to April, 1896, throughout Australia and New Zealand, raising the temperature in New South Wales to such a height that the Government actually carried people free by rail from the interior to the coast in order to save their lives.

The temperature in Sydney ran up to such record heights as 106 and 108 degrees; and even in New Zealand, except at the extreme southern end, the famous hot northwesters of the Canterbury district dried up the crops, while the North Island, especially near Auckland, looked as though it had been toasted in front of some Titanic fire.

In contrast, but evidently in correspondence with these abnormal features, the North Pacific was unusually stormy, Honolulu receiving quite an unusual supply of "Kona" or Winter storms; while California, at the boundary of the oceanic area, came in for a similar excess of its curiously marked Winter rains.

A general survey would appear to show that the equatorial rain belt has been less developed than usual, and that the atmosphere over the continents on either side of it has been less heaped up into narrow belts of high pressure and more uniformly spread over large surfaces.